

Red Rock Ranger District
June 13, 2013 Non-motorized Trails Planning Meeting
6-8PM, Hilton Hotel at the Ridge in VOC

For Forest Service related information on this trail planning process contact Jennifer Burns at 928-203-7529 jmburns@fs.fed.us For more information regarding the planning process contact Cate Bradley at 520-791-6472 cate_bradley@nps.gov

Meeting notes and other trail planning materials will be posted to the Coconino Forest Red Rock District website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/coconino/recarea/?recid=54892> go to *Land and Resource Management* (on left side) then click on *Planning*, or find meeting notes and other related documents to this planning process at www.vvcc.us scroll to the RTCA Documents link.

Next meeting is Thursday July 25, 2013 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Hilton Sedona – 90 Ridge Trail Drive

May 16th Participants: Rachel Murdoch, Mike O’Neil, Phil Kincheloe, Heide Heidepriem, Rolf Reinfried, Birgit Loewenski, Gregory DuBois, Ginny Rench, Steve Rench, Craig Stevens, Chris Lombardi, Jen Hensick, Janet Levy, John Finch, Cole Mace, Erick Mace, Jim Starkey, Jan Starkey, Cynthia Lovely, Rocky Luedeker, L Luedeker, Andy Beeler, Keith Peterson, Sam Serrill, Jeff Bear, Mike Hoboush, Keran O’Brien, Dorothy O’Brien, Olga Ostrom, Dean Williamson, Jennifer Burns, Cate Bradley (apologies for misspellings)

Meeting Agenda

- Intros
- Small Group Report Out from May Meeting
- Map Review Process Results
- Process Report Draft Discussion
- Safety Coalition Update
- Field Trips Discussion
- Meeting Dates Review
- Forest Service Trails Update

Welcome

Cate welcomed participants and asked for self-introductions at the tables, and reviewed the agenda.

Small Group Report Out from May Meeting

Dorothy reported the basic discussion from the Tourism/Commercial group. The group discussed that tourists can be better informed about how to prepare for their visit to Sedona and safe use of the trails here if the “what to expect” information from the Chamber of Commerce was more specific. There was support among those in this group for whatever is necessary to create a shuttle service from various recreation rental retailers to trailheads. This would reduce traffic congestion on streets and over-crowding at trailhead parking areas and could help disperse trail users to lesser used trails.

Keith reported for the Funding small group and explained that trail funding provided through fees collected locally, as allowed through the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), could

go away when FLREA sunsets in 2014. The Red Rock Ranger District generates about \$1.3M from these fees which are important contributions to the FS trails maintenance program on the District.

Cate read from the notes of the Education/Interpretation small group. The group discussed that adding QR codes to signs or GPS coordinates to sign posts would help locating in the event of a Search and Rescue call, and color coded signage to indicate trail condition and/or skill level. Improving information about the Red Rock trails on a website would help visitors plan better for their trip. Many trail users don't read the signage that is up and are not familiar with the carin trail marking system.

Eric explained the process of the Map Review Results small group. He talked about using the map overlays from the last 2 months of meetings on top of each other to look for clusters of areas where trails were recommended. Included were trails from the West Sedona area behind the cultural park, trails in the Village of Oak Creek and a trail in the canyon. He also mentioned they reviewed the lists of trails that separated trails into different categories.

There was a prioritized list and corresponding map of new trails generated for orientation. The list is included in the May meeting notes.

Map Review Process Results

At the April meeting, several volunteers (Paul, Olga, Dorothy, Phil and Tomas) agreed to review each map overlay and comments from the spreadsheets to look for categories, patterns and other similar or related information for the larger group to use as we begin to prioritize from the list. It was noted when the list was handed out that many proposed trails for adoption were missing. Those proposed trails are included in the original spreadsheet of comments but not indicated on a map, this may have been how they got left off from the working group list. However, all comments (and trails) mentioned in the map review process have been recorded and included in the notes from the April and May meetings, so that information will not be lost.

Following are the notes from that working group (yellow highlights indicate trails that already exist):

USFS TRAILS PLANNING MAPS WORKING GROUP DOCUMENT

Thursday May 30, 2013 5:30pm-9:30pm Red Rock Ranger Station(RRRS)

Forrest Saville, USFS; Olga Olstrom; Paul Sullivan; Rachel Murdoch; Keran and Dorothy O'Brien

(note: *yellow highlights indicate existing trails in the Sedona trail system*) (# of Maps indicates the number of times the comment was made)

of MAPS CONNECTORS for Bikers, Equestrians and Hikers

- 2 Highline to **Templeton**
- 3 **Turkey Creek** to Elmer Trail to **Kel Fox** away from town over Westside of House Mountain
- 3 **Turkey Creek** to Page Springs
- 3 Last Frontier to Elmerville-continuous trail around high use area
- 4 **Dry Creek** to **Turkey Creek**
- 1 Aerie Trailhead to clump of trails North of 89A bridge and
- 3 **Boynton Pass Road** (camping areas) to clump of trails N of 89A bridge
- 3 **Hot Loop** to **Big Park Loop** (requested by Bk,Eq,Hk)
- 1 Rabbit Ears to **Jacks Canyon**
- 1 White Cliffs to Damfino (also reroute)
- 2 **Submarine** to **Llama** to **Courthouse Butte** skirting along W. Lee Mountain

- 3 Hangover to **Huckabee** Trail through Saddle then down onto **Munds Wagon Trail**
- 1 Alternate Bike connection to get off ledges to **Tea Cup**
- 1 Lower **Chimney Rock** to **Dry Creek** (private lands)
- 1 **Lizard Head** to **Dry Creek** (private lands)
- 2 RRRS north of Wild Horse Mesa to **Hot Loop** (also new trail)
- 1 **Dry Creek** to back of **Bearsign** creates loop hike
- 1 **Harding** and **Cookstove**
- 1 **Jacks Canyon** to gap between **Munds** and Lee Mountain
- 1 Jim Bryant to Gap
- 1 **Airport Loop** connector
- 1 Anaconda Trail to **OK Trail** to skip AZ Cypress which is sandy and boring

CONNECTORS for Bikers, Equestrians and Hikers Cont'

- 2 **Regional Trails** between Sedona and Flagstaff from Kachina Trail (?)
- 1 Sedona to FLG via Schnebly, 525rd, Thompson Ladder
- 3 Sedona to Cottonwood create parallel to Lime Kiln Trail (FR20?)
- 1 Flagstaff to Sedona from Plateau above the rim to RRRS (from Secret Mountain Wilderness Area)

of MAPS LOOPS

- 1 Loop around **Cockscomb** exists, jumps also requested
- 1 Beaverhead Flat Overlook for Equestrian Horse Loop> **Kel Fox>RRRS** around again 2x's under SR179 –NEEDS BETTER ACCESS
- 3 **Baldwin-Templeton> RRRS** staying west of homes
- 1 Stacked Loops at Cultural Center

of MAPS ADA AND MULTI-USE LOOPS

- 2 Around obstacles for varied skill level **Dry Creek Area** between **Chuck wagon** and Gunslinger to create area for beginner/training/learning/practice
- 2 Multi use access across west side to Cottonwood from **Bearsign/Vultee Arch Rd.** (improved) **FR152** and **Dry Creek** Parking Lot
- 4 **Boynton Pass** class 4 surface ADA Loop
- 4 **Bell Rock Loop** class 4 surface ADA Loop loop under sr179 to **HT Area** also (above loops were discussed and agreed by multi-use participants including 2 Bike Shop Owner, residents and resident in wheel chair)

of MAPS ACCESS

- 1 Better entrance for **Adobe Jacks**
- 1 Better neighborhood access to **Big Park Loop** where possible
- 1 Better Parking at Cultural Center
- 1 Beaverhead Flat Overlook for Equestrian Horse Loop> **Kel Fox> RRRS** around again 2x's under SR179 –NEEDS BETTER ACCESS

of MAPS SHUTTLES TO TRAILHEADS

- 4 + **Baldwin, Templeton**, Midgley Bridge, **West Fork**

of MAPS ADOPTIONS

- 6 Transept to Slimshady
- 3 Under the Radar
- 1 Hogs=Broken Arrow
- 2 Tomahawk to **Schnebly**; **Old Munds Wagon Trail** to East of Schnebly would be Hikers Only Wilderness WSA
- 4 Last Frontier at rear of Cultural Park to **Girdner** Trail connecting Aerie and **Cockscomb** also Western Civilization Connection

- 6 Pyramid> Witchdoctor> Catwalk> Schuerman Mountain make one loop with SkyHigh Trail
- 1 Upper Teacup to Moose Fingers
- 3 Sketch (Carol Canyon)
- 2 Trail between Courthouse and Bell Rock (Saddle Trail or Bell Ct Trail)
- 2 Canyon of Fools
- 1 existing trail to top of Lizard Head

of MAPS NEW TRAILS

- 1 Page Springs to 89B to Kachina System
- 2 RRRS north of Wild Horse Mesa to Hot Loop (also connector)
- 1 Sterling Pass Trailhead (south of Slide Rock) connect to Wilson (Hikers Only)
- 3 Broken Arrow to Brewer to Hogs
- 2 East of Airport Mesa to Poco Diablo for multi-use and skill level
- 2 Lee Mountain to Munds Mountain
- 4 Damfino back east of Snoopy Rock and Marg's Draw
- 1 Brins Mesa Trailhead on Vultee Arch Rd. to new parking lot at Dry Creek Vista
- 1 Lower Snake to Girdner
- 1 East of Cow pies, Bear wallow and slick rock

of MAPS SIGNS

- 1 Beaverhead Flat
- 1 Move Bikers away from Wash-Don't turn into a wash
- 1 Dog waste bags at Trailheads with signs to pack in-pack out

of MAPS REROUTES

- 1 Re-align Girdner
- 1 Re-align Rupp
- 1 White Cliffs to Damfino (also connector)
- 1 Lime Kiln-Death Climb Bypass
- 1 Pit of Doom = Tomahawk
- 1 AZ Cypress

of MAPS TRAILER PARKING-EQUESTRIAN

- 2 Yavapai Point/Vista
- 1 Courthouse Vista and Other Access through Neighborhoods (Also Requested From Local Hikers)
- 1 Brins Mesa Trailhead
- 1 Turkey Creek Trails
- 1 Equestrian Trailhead at La Barranca

Cate said we are getting to the prioritization phase of this process and asked that this list of categories be reviewed by each participant for them to consider how they would prioritize their top 10 areas/issues/concerns. She reminded everyone that this trails plan revision will have a long shelf life, maybe 15 to 20 years, so consider short term, medium term and long term projects as part of the priority process. She said either way, all of the suggestions from the whole process have been captured in meeting notes. The Forest Service will have those ideas for future reference.

There was a comment that this list does not suggest disbursement of users to trails that are not as busy or marketing materials to guide people to those trails. Jennifer described some trail concepts the Forest Service uses regarding trail opportunities such as "Gateways" (trails off the major transportation

route(s), “Front Country” (trails that are easily accessible and mostly visited by day users), “Neighborwoods” (trail accessibility from neighborhoods). These may be some guiding concepts as the group begins to think about prioritizing the information that has been collected. Jennifer presented a “composite” map of the existing FS trails, the proposed trails from all the map overlays, and the suggested “hub” areas. The proposed trails were not named on the map and there were requests for that information to better assess the proposals. There was also an offer to use an existing map with interactive capabilities. Cate said she and Jennifer would talk about that option.

There was a suggestion that a survey be conducted to learn more about other priorities or other issues or concern beyond the physical trails system. Cynthia, Jennifer and others will draft one. Another concern is that the list of new trails will be prioritized and cost so much that other projects that may be more effective in addressing some pressing issues, won’t get funded or planned and implemented. In addition, several connectors of existing trails may be more effective than one new trail. In the same vein, there was a comment to do the necessary maintenance and address the social trails before adding any new trails. These comments can be considered in the survey development.

One concern raised was for visitors who don’t live here and their right to have a voice in this process – how can they know about this and comment. Cate said the notes from all the meetings are posted on the FS website as well as the Verde Valley Cyclist Coalition website in an effort to make the content of the process available to those who could not, or chose not to, attend the meetings. She said this was agreed upon so that the process would be as open as possible and the time and commitment of those who did attend would not be wasted with objections raised by others who did not participate or comment on the meeting content or results. Jennifer said that any results from this process that are included in a Forest Service plan or action will be posted on the Forest Service website with time for public comment.

It was suggested to consider how other locations, for example the BLM in Moab, conducted their prioritization process. Some want to know how many new trails or miles of trail the Forest Service is willing to commit to working on per year. Jennifer said there had been no decision regarding that.

Jennifer and Cate asked the group to use the categorized handouts (included above) to review before the next meeting and consider what their top 10 priorities are going forward. In the meantime, the survey will be developed to gather more information about priorities. At the July meeting participants will be asked to identify their priorities with dots. Various maps and all the acetate overlays will be available.

It was asked “how static will the outcome of this process be? What if there is a dramatic change in recreation trends before the next trail plan revision?” Cate said the purpose of doing this trail plan revision is to respond to trail user demands now. The plan helps establish some predictability about where and when the Forest Service, and partner groups, will work on trails over the coming years. All plans have flexibility, but too much flexibility leads to capricious and uncertain situations.

Safety Coalition Update

Craig reviewed the concept of a Trails Safety Coalition, similar to the group in Prescott that is having success. He said their goal is to discuss, among all the trail user groups, the issues that were causing conflict on the trail. Marty Glinsky indicated an interest, and some equestrian groups in the region, in working with Craig to begin similar discussions. They will convene a meeting, for all who are

interested, at the Forest Service offices in the near future. Others who expressed interest in this are Gregory, Eric, Cole, and Rama. Craig's contact information is craigstevens224@gmail.com

Field Trips Discussion

Jennifer will conduct a field trip to the Verde Valley School (Turkey Creek area) on June 30 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. to review conditions and resource damage in the area, primarily horse use and social trails, and review opportunities for trail system additions. Contact Jennifer at 928-551-2559.

John said he is willing to lead field trips to the proposed trails (Special Ed, Pyramid, Catwalk, and Witch Doctor) for anyone who is interested. Contact John at johnf0246@yahoo.com.

Rama is willing to lead field trips to Chimney Rock to look at maintenance skills) for anyone who is interested. Contact Rama at rama@tombird.com

Process Report Draft Discussion

Cate said she is beginning to sketch out the outline and basics of the final report from this process and will circulate it for review prior to completion. She said she needs content experts to describe in a, neutral way, a thumbnail profile of each trail user group. Paul, Craig, Birgit, John, Dave and Rama volunteered to provide brief descriptions.

Forest Service Trails Update

Jennifer reported there is a transit study to look at a shuttle between trailheads to Oak Creek Canyon on Hwy 179. June 29 there is an Adopt-a-Trail class offered.

The City Council meeting on June 25 will include a report on easements to trails in Sedona, and a proposal for a skills park.

The Verde Front Trails group will meet on July 30 to discuss trails along the Verde River.

"You are here" signs are being installed at the Carroll Canyon, Bell Rock and Dry Creek areas. Sedona Westerners made a donation to the Friends of the Forest to install markers to reference locations in the event of a Search and Rescue call.

National Trails Day happened June 1st, which is too hot. There may be a trails day event scheduled in the fall instead.

Next Meeting Date (note change of date from usual)

Next meeting is Thursday July 25, 2013 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Hilton Sedona.

All meeting notes and reports cited in this process can be accessed via www.vvcc.us and click on the "RTCA Documents" folder. This web link can also be a hot link on other websites. Meeting notes and other Forest Service related documents for this trails planning process are also at www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/coconino/recarea/?recid=54892

Next Meeting Agenda

- TBA